

# **Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd**

**Agenda** for board meeting of 16 July 2008, Substitution Pty Ltd, 1/484 William Street, North Melbourne

## **1. Minutes**

That the minutes of the meeting of 16 April 2008 be approved as a true and accurate record.

## **2. Co-operative Education**

Report from Graeme Charles on complementary CFV brochure to Co-operative College brochure, Co-operative College courses particularly with Murray Goulburn and SEHC and his visits to SA and NSW regarding co-operative education.

An online course has been developed using funds from the Gardiner Foundation. It is in its final stages of tweaking. Graeme Charles initiated this project and persuaded both MG and Gardiner Foundation to support it. The \$5000 for this has been received from the Foundation.

<http://www.australia.coop/courses/understanding/understanding.htm>

In discussions with Gary Lewis, and agreed by the Chair and Deputy Chair, we have purchased 120 copies of Gary's book The Democracy Principle for \$273 to be distributed as we like – including participants in Co-operative Identity Workshops.

**REPORT:** Graeme Charles

## **3. australia.coop**

australia.coop has a new web host. After 12 months of difficulties with MD Web Hosting it was necessary to shift to a new web host e.g. hacking of the host server, variable FTP access, unannounced changes to server configuration and deteriorating service. There was an attempt to shift to the .coop host provider working with the New Zealand Cooperatives Association but this encountered immediate difficulties in service provision and service quality. Reluctantly, therefore, it was decided to opt for hostmonster in the USA. Hostmonster hosting charges are about one third of the charge of MD Web Hosting.

## **4. Membership Survey**

It was noted that the CCA meeting on 4 February 2008 had suggested that Federations survey their members to establish membership numbers. It was agreed that a brief survey on membership and other matters would be useful. It was agreed at the last meeting that the Secretary would prepare a brief survey and distribute this to the board for consideration. This was considered

at the meeting and it was agreed that the survey should be redrafted to emphasise service provision by CFV for co-operatives e.g. director training.

**ACTION:** Secretary

## **5. Membership Subscriptions**

Westgate has not yet paid its annual subscription.

## **6. Financial Statements**

## **7. Audit**

Should we seek an exemption this year?

As reported in australia.coop:

The Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd has succeeded in lobbying the Victorian Government to amend the Co-operatives act to provide discretion for the registrar of Co-operatives to exempt small co-operatives from all or specified financial reporting and audit requirements under the Act.

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This amendment has the potential to save hundreds to thousands of dollars for small co-operatives in Victoria

The Victorian Government accepted the argument of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd that the availability of this discretion was consistent with a similar discretion for associations under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and available to the Australian Securities and Investment Commission in respect of companies under the Corporations Act 2001.

The discretion will be available on a case-by-case basis upon application by a co-operative. The registrar will have to be convinced that standard financial reporting requirements would impose an unreasonable burden on a co-operative.

The amendment creates a level playing field in financial reporting requirements for associations, companies and co-operatives.

Read the 28 April 2008 letter from the Director, Dr. David Cousins, Consumer Affairs Victoria, about this and other amendments.

## **8. CCA**

Report from Graeme Charles on the last CCA meeting on 20 May 2008:

1. Co-operative Legislation - In terms of achieving nationally consistent legislation "inaction reigns supreme" D.O. to contact Minister and Commissioner suggesting CCA would like to participate in a teleconference with the Ministerial Working Party.
2. Retail Co-ops Workshop - due to unavailability of key personnel, event deferred until early 2009.

3. Co-operative Education - GC reported on Chris Cooper's upcoming visit to Australia. Also reported on CFV's development of an online training module for co-operative education. Referred those interested to the Land O'Lakes website where they could view their online training module.
4. Wheat Bill - PW reported that he is waiting to see the re-write of legislation that will include mention of co-operatives.
5. Letter to politicians promoting co-operatives. PW will consider this.
6. ICA membership. - general discussion, no strong feeling from anyone that we should seriously consider joining the ICA. To be dealt with again at next CCA meeting.
7. Electronic billboard of sale/buy co-operative shares - led by JH. Some doubt about legality of such a move because of Taxation Act implications. No decision made.
8. Stock Exchange -CCU's. General discussion. It was felt that an article about CCU's to go onto the australia.coop website could be useful.
9. Secretariat - agreed that CFV would assume responsibility for CCA for a period of two years, after CFSA relinquish the role. DO indicated he will remain with CFSA until end of 2008.
10. State Federations Update - WA reported that their new co-operative legislation is close. That their annual conference will be held on October 16, and that Chris Cooper will be working with several WA co-ops in the first week of August. United Farmers Co-op has merged with NZ co-op Ravensdown Fertilisers. SA annual conference on October 17 in Adelaide. VIC reported on CAV customer survey and changes to the Victorian Co-operatives Act. NSW annual conference in November, keynote speaker CEO Co-ops Europe. Department of Fair Trading has posted a "State of the Co-op Sector" report on their website. A recent workshop bringing together boards and senior management in a particular region was quite successful. Q reported that Mackay Sugar Co-op appears set to demutualise.
11. Other business - CE suggested a face-to-face CCA meeting was overdue. Possibility of doing this to coincide with CFNSW conference in November this year. CFSA will organise next teleconference for August.

Report prepared by Graeme Charles  
May 2008.

**REPORT:** Chairman and Deputy Chairman

## **9. Co-operatives and Dairy Farmers**

At the last meeting it was agreed:

A follow-up letter should be forwarded by the Chairman in response to Noel Campbell's comments. **ACTION:** Chairman

The independent expert advise that had identified co-operatives as the price setter. **ACTION:** Deputy Chairman

The UDV should conference in June 2008 should be encouraged to adopt a resolution urging dairy farmers to support co-operatives... **ACTION:** N. Black  
A follow-up article should be prepared for the Australian Dairy Farmer.

**ACTION:** Deputy Chairman

**REPORT:** Chairman and Deputy Chairman

## **10. AGM**

**Next Meeting:** 10: 30. am, 16 October 2008, Substitution Pty Ltd, 1/484  
William Street, North Melbourne

**Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd**  
**2008 Schedule of Board and AGM meetings**

**Board**

Start time: 10:30am

Venue: Substitution Pty Ltd, 1/484 William Street, North Melbourne

16 July 2008

15 October 2008

19 November 2008

**AGM**

11:30 am 19 November 2008